



Saratoga County Office for the Aging

December 2021

# *The Senior Sentinel*

*The Saratoga County Office for the Aging wish all of you and yours a*

***Happy, Healthy and Safe Holiday Season.***

***The Office for the Aging will be CLOSED***

***Friday, December 24, 2021***

***&***

***Friday, December 31, 2021***



## **Congratulations!**

**Cheryl B. on Winning the Renaming Contest.**

**The New Name for Congregate Dining is...**

**Saratoga County Gather & Dine Program**

## **HOLIDAY DINNER**

In honor of the holiday season we will have our Christmas Special on  
***December at the Gather and Dine Program locations*** featuring:

**Stuffed Chicken Florentine  
Sour Cream & Chive Mashed Potatoes  
Glazed Baby Carrots  
Whole Wheat Dinner Roll  
Cheesecake with Cherry Topping**

Reservations are required – please sign up at least 24 hours in advance (by noon the day before). Registration forms must be completed by each participant annually. Suggested donation is \$2.00 for those age 60 and over. For those under 60 years of age there is a \$8.00 fee. Please call (518) 884-4100 or (518) 363-4020 for additional information, and for phone numbers of locations to make a reservation. Our regular meals served Monday through Friday offer a hot, nourishing meal supplying one-third of the Recommended Daily Allowance. Coffee, tea and milk are also available at the meal sites.  
**Reservations are required.**

## **Does Medicare Cover Flu Shots and Other Vaccines?**

Medicare covers vaccines and immunizations in two ways. Medicare Part D covers most vaccines and immunizations. However, some vaccinations are instead covered by Part B:

- Influenza (flu) shots, including both the seasonal flu vaccine and the H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine.
- Pneumococcal (pneumonia) shots
- Hepatitis B shots
- COVID-19 vaccines

Part B also covers vaccines after you have been exposed to a dangerous virus or disease. For example, Part B will cover a tetanus shot if you step on a rusty nail, or a rabies shot if you are exposed to a bat.

**Let's start with how Medicare covers the flue shot.** Medicare Part B covers one flu shot every flu season. The flu season usually runs from November through April. Depending on when you choose to get your flu shot, Medicare may cover a flu shot twice in one calendar year. For example, if you get a shot in January for the 2020/2021 flu season, you could get another shot in October 2021 for the 2021/2022 flu season.

**Next, the pneumonia shot.** Pneumonia is an infection that targets the lungs and can cause fever, difficulty breathing, and other symptoms. Pneumonia shots help prevent pneumonia. Medicare Part B covers two separate pneumonia vaccines. Part B covers two separate pneumonia vaccines. Part B covers the first shot if you have never received Part B coverage for a pneumonia shot before. You are covered for a different, second vaccination one year after receiving the first shot. You are not required to provide a vaccination history when receiving the pneumonia vaccine. You can verbally tell the health care professional administering the shot if/when you have received past shots.

**Medicare Part B additionally covers hepatitis B shots if you qualify.** Hepatitis B is a virus that attacks the liver and can cause chronic liver disease. Hepatitis B shots can help prevent the disease. Medicare Part B covers the hepatitis B vaccine if you are at medium or high risk for hepatitis B. If you are at low risk for hepatitis B, the shot will be covered under Part D.

**And finally, let's discuss how Medicare covers COVID-19 vaccines.** Original Medicare Part B covers COVID-19 vaccines, regardless of whether you have Original Medicare or Medicare Advantage Plan. You should bring your red, white, and blue Medicare card with you to your vaccination appointment, even if you have a Medicare Advantage Plan. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved an additional dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or booster for certain populations. Speak with your doctor to learn more about your eligibility for a this dose or for a booster.

If you qualify for the above vaccines, Original Medicare covers them at 100% of the Medicare approved amount when you receive the service from a participating provider. This means you pay nothing (no deductible or coinsurance). Medicare Advantage Plans are required to cover flu shots without applying deductibles, copayments, or coinsurance when you see an in-network provider and meet Medicare's eligibility requirements for the service.

Now that flu season is here, it is a great time to schedule your flu shot. Speak to you health care provider about any questions you have.

Reprinted from: Medicare Rights Center; Dear Marci ,November 2021

***Nutritional Program Weather Closing***  
***If the home delivered meals are canceled, the information will be listed on your***  
***local T.V. stations under Saratoga County Senior Meals.***

## Boosting Nutrition During the Holidays

The Holidays are upon us—time to celebrate and enjoy some festive indulgences. While there certainly is room to enjoy some of our favorite decadent dishes and treats, we do not have to abandon healthy habits. Following a few simple steps can help us accommodate these holiday foods into a healthy dietary pattern.

**Switching It Up**-Healthy ingredient swaps can boost the nutrition of your favorite dishes often without any significant sacrifice in regards to taste. Butter which is high in saturated fat can be decreased in some dishes by substituting heart healthy poly or monounsaturated fat like olive or canola oil. This switch can even kick up the flavor in a dish like mashed potatoes. Adding herbs and spices such as chives or low sodium chicken broth (in place of some of the milk) to those potatoes and other dishes decreases the need for added salt. Vegetable powders (not vegetable salts) add significant flavor to these dishes while not increasing sodium content. Adding steamed greens such as kale, or mashed rutabagas along with some sautéed onions to mashed potatoes adds additional flavor, color and boosts nutrition.

For some baked goods, half the oil can often be substituted with applesauce, mashed banana and even in season mashed sweet potato or winter squash for part of the oil or butter to reduce fat and calorie content.

**Use Seasonal Foods**-Take advantage of the nutrition, beauty and lower cost of foods that are in season this time of year. Winter fruits and vegetables rank high in nutrients, fiber, and health promoting plant chemicals. Most have a low-calorie count and can be dressed up in the colors of the season to celebrate. Include cranberries, beets and pomegranate reds and bright and deep greens of broccoli, kale, Brussels sprouts and spinach. Add some winter whites such as cauliflower, parsnips, and turnips along with yellow and orange hue fruits and vegetables such as winter squash, carrots, oranges and clementine's. Prepare these vegetables and fruits simply to let their peak flavors come through. Roasting vegetables with a little olive oil and lemon juice is often enough. Depending on the dish, toss in pomegranate seeds, dried cranberries, cherries or apricots for added color and nutrition.

**Consider The Portion**-If you find that by adapting your favorite holiday recipes make it feel like too much of a sacrifice, then give yourself the okay to prepare these favorite recipes according to tradition. Consider smaller portions of these favorites especially if you are trying to control your weight or other health markers such as blood pressure, blood sugar and serum lipid levels. Using smaller plates and smaller serving utensils can make portions seem larger. By decorating your table with nice linens, candles, florals and as mentioned, colorful fruits vegetables, this will help take the focus off the portion size and onto the beautiful surrounding table.

**Choose Fizz**- A holiday toast with sparkling water can be just as celebratory as alcoholic beverages. Alcoholic beverages are generally high in calories and have the potential to sabotage your plans to eat healthy. Liven up that sparkling water with a splash of cranberry or other fruit juice along with a few frozen berries.

## Have you applied for HEAP? Don't let the heating bills pile up!

Hone Energy Assistance Program ( HEAP) can help with heating and electric bills.

### Income Eligibility:

Household Members	Maximin Monthly Gross Income
1	\$2,729
2	\$3,569
3	\$4,409
4	\$5,249

For a HEAP application, please call our office at **(518) 884-4111**

